



NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release: June 9, 2004
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Kernan awards training grant to Rockport's Peerless Pottery, Inc.

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. – Gov. Joe Kernan announced today that the Indiana Department of Workforce Development recently awarded a \$191,625 Incumbent Worker Training grant to Spencer County's Peerless Pottery Inc. to upgrade the skills of 105 existing employees.

Established in 1902, Peerless Pottery Inc. is a fourth generation company that manufactures a complete line of both residential and commercial vitreous china bathroom fixtures consisting of toilets, lavatories and urinals.

" Indiana must augment traditional manufacturing skills with more advanced techniques to stay competitive," said Kernan. "Peerless Pottery has a 100-year history of staying ahead of the curve. We are pleased that the state is able to provide assistance to upgrade the skills of its workforce."

Leveraged with a \$216,363 match by the company, the grant will allow participants to learn new manufacturing competencies and continuous process improvement techniques. A combination of 40 hours of classroom instruction and over 80 hours of hands-on training will enhance each employee's effectiveness on the job. Upon completion of the training program, each participant will earn a 10-core certificate of technical achievement in advanced manufacturing.

The company applied for the grant with the assistance of the Southwestern Indiana Small Business Development Center (SBDC), which is hosted by the Metropolitan Evansville Chamber of Commerce.

According to Albert Umbach, president of Peerless Pottery Inc., "I am impressed with the speed and willingness of the SBDC and the Workforce Development staff to provide a much needed training program. I am certain that Peerless Pottery and its workforce will benefit greatly from such a program."

"Peerless Pottery wanted to improve the efficiency of its operations and came to our organization for suggestions," said Dorrie Lobue, of the Southwestern Indiana SBDC. "We were aware that the state provides tools, such as the Incumbent Worker Training grant, which give our local companies a competitive edge."

All Indiana businesses are eligible to apply for Incumbent Worker Training grants. The grants are designed to create a world-class workforce in Indiana, through continuous improvement to the skill levels of Hoosier workers.

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Through its various programs and initiatives, the Indiana Department of Workforce Development is charged with continually improving the Hoosier workforce by assisting companies to create new jobs and improve employee skills. The agency offers a variety of training and educational grants, partners with the state's 27 WorkOne Centers, administers the unemployment insurance system, provides labor market information, assists employers with preparing workers for layoffs and closures and operates a statewide job placement service.

For more information on this or other DWD programs, contact Jeff Harris at 317/232-3396 or visit the web site at www.workforce.IN.gov.

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